

# JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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## EDITOR LEAVES FOR AFRICA

Japan's representative at the forthcoming assembly of the International Missionary Council in Ghana, West Africa, will be the Reverend Kaname Tsukahara, General Affairs Department Secretary of the National Christian Council, and Editor of the ACTIVITY NEWS. Mr. Tsukahara left Tokyo International Airport December 21. The Assembly is scheduled to meet in Accra, capital of the new state of Ghana, from December 28 until January 8.

In line with the conference theme, "The Christian Mission at This Hour", Mr. Tsukahara is taking with him, in response to a questionnaire received from the International Missionary Council, a statement of the findings of the National Christian Council. These findings, which are to be submitted to the Ghana meeting, tell of recent events in Japan which illustrate the meaning of the Christian mission in our day. The paper indicates some of the questions that arise in Japan in the shaping of missionary strategy, and concludes with the following statement on mission and unity:







"From the standpoint of Christianity Japan is still a pagan nation. Its people in general do not have any real understanding of the Christian religion, and the multiplicity of its denominations and sects perplexes them. In such an environment there is particular need for an ecumenical movement.

"However, under such circumstances the ecumenical approach should not be taken to mean merely a cooperative movement. Our real desire is for the kind of ecumenical movement which takes for its premise and goal the reuniting of the Church.

"The National Christian Council of Japan desires that the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches become one body, and thus exercise a powerful function in the uniting of the Church and in its mission."

Following the close of the Ghana assembly, Mr. Tsukahara will spend a few days in Geneva, Switzerland, where he hopes to contact the World Council of Churches' Commission on Faith and Order in behalf of the Japan National Christian Council's newly organized commission on church unity. He will go on to London, and then to New York in order to visit the Far Eastern Office of the Division of Foreign Missions of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U. S. A. Mr. Tsukahara also plans to get in touch with Japanese pastors across the United States, in order to enlist their participation in the forthcoming centennial observance of Protestantism in Japan.

The Japanese leader expects to be home in Tokyo early in February, 1958.

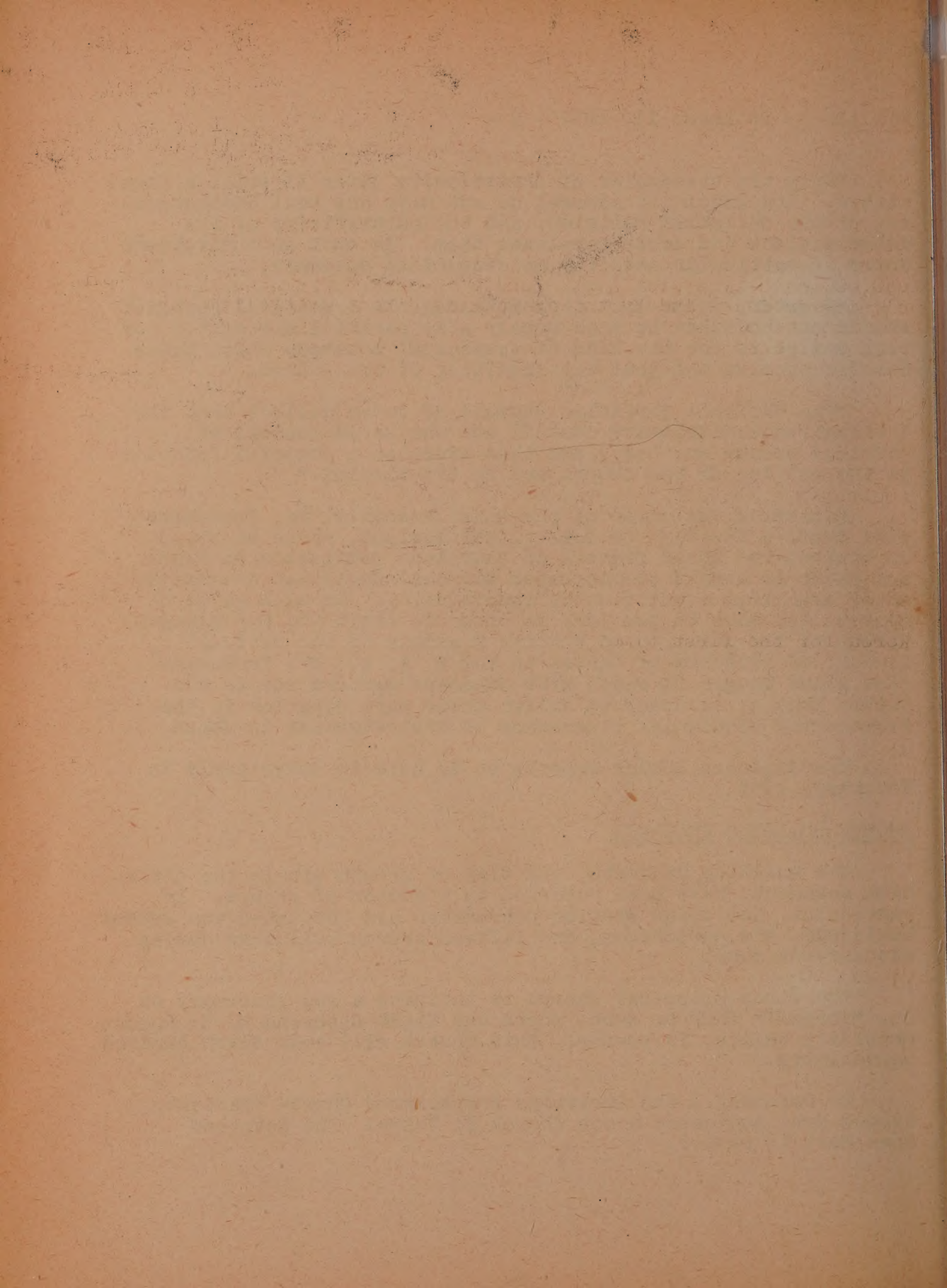
#### CHURCH BUILDING PROJECTS

New building projects, one sign of growth within the Christian movement, have been reported by a number of groups. In particular, the Japan Baptist Convention has completed two school buildings, six parsonages, and fifteen church buildings during the current year.

The Japan Episcopal Church is building a new sanctuary at St. Michael's Church, Kobe, where the Right Reverend M. H. Yashiro, presiding bishop, is pastor. This church will seat seven hundred worshippers.

On December 1 the Christian Brotherhood Church (Kirisuto Kyodai Dan) dedicated a new church in Tokyo. The Reverend Goro Mori is pastor.







## KOREAN CHURCH IN JAPAN

The Korean Church in Japan held its annual meeting at Hokubu Church in Osaka on November 15-17, with forty-two pastors and elders in attendance. The Koreans have fifty churches and preaching stations in this country, with 1,370 members and 680 catechumens. The total Korean community in Japan, however, numbers 680,000, and of this number some 450,000 have ties with North Korea. Welfare work and medical clinics in Osaka and Kyoto, as well as direct evangelism, are the concern of the Korean Church. Many of their countrymen belong to the poorest classes of Japanese society. One missionary couple from the Presbyterian Church of Canada helps the Korean Church in its witness.

Next year the Koreans will observe the fiftieth anniversary of their church in this country. During the Meiji Era, Sen Tsuda, founder of Tsuda English School in Tokyo, was instrumental in the conversion of a young Korean, Li Shu-chung. Li, in turn, translated the Gospel of St. Mark into the Korean language, and wrote an article about Korea which later appeared in a magazine in the United States. This article, which came to the attention of Presbyterian and Methodist leaders, helped to awaken concern for the evangelization of Korea, and the American mission boards, in 1884 and 1885, sent missionaries to Korea for the first time.

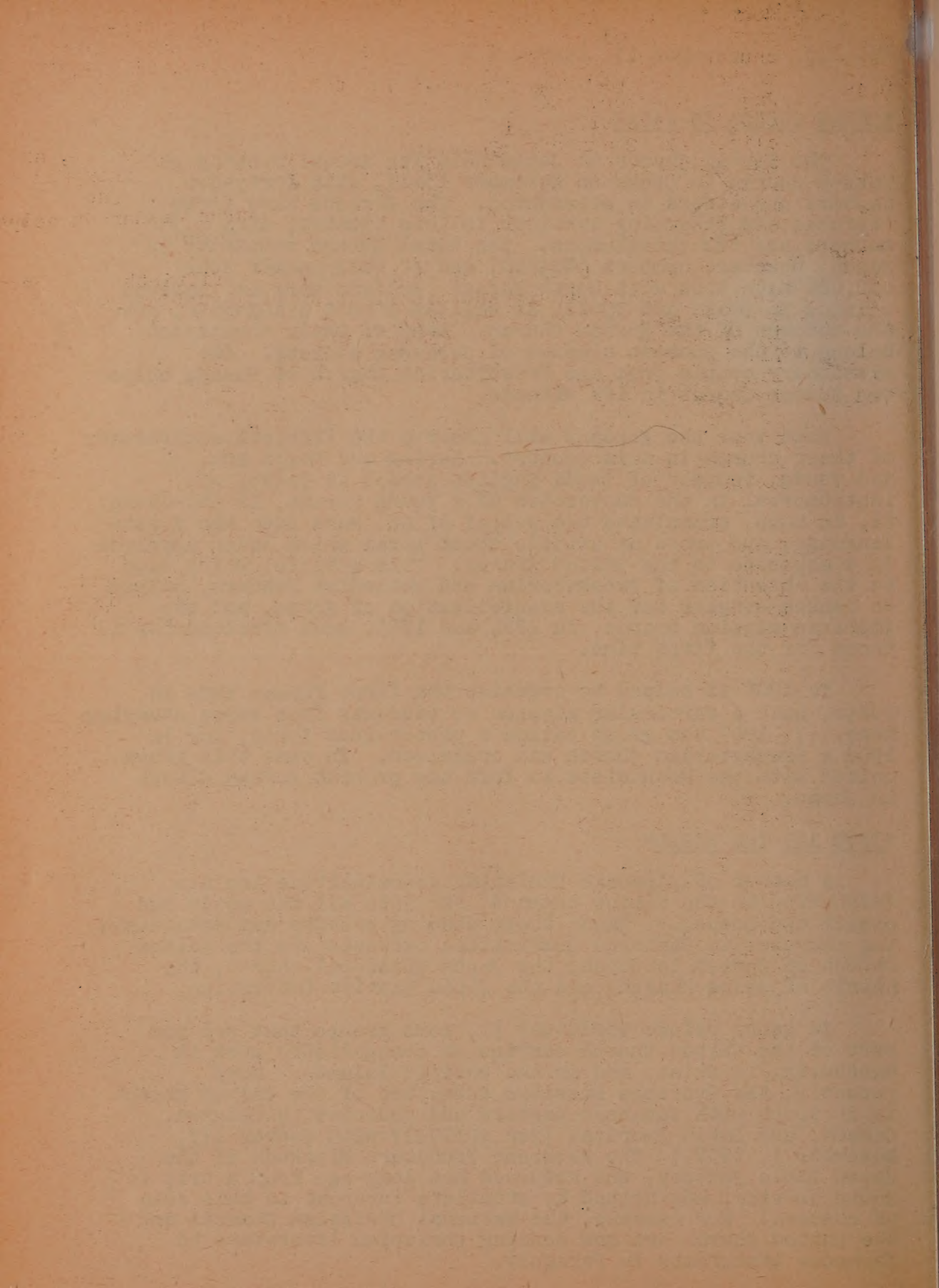
In 1906 Li helped to organize the first Korean YMCA in Tokyo, with a particular mission to students from Korea studying here. In 1907 the group called a pastor from Korea, and in 1908 a Presbyterian Church was organized. In time this group united with the Methodists to form the present Korean Church in Japan.

## "INTO ALL THE WORLD"

A number of Japanese Christian denominations are now responding to the divine command, "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel." Among those sending pastors and establishing churches in Japanese communities overseas are the United Church of Christ in Japan, the Japan Episcopal Church, the Spirit of Jesus Church, and the Japan Baptist Convention.

In years before World War II, some groups that are now part of the United Church carried on evangelistic work in Manchuria, in China, and in the Pacific Islands. More recently, the Overseas Missions Committee of the United Church is in touch with Japanese pastors and churches in Okinawa, Canada, and Latin America. (See ACTIVITY NEWS Number 113, November 1, 1957.) The Reverend Tsunetaro Miyakoda of the Japan Bible Society, who returned not long ago from a trip to South America, has helped to stimulate interest in this area of concern. For example, the National Christian Council and the United Church are now sending Christian literature to Japanese immigrants in Paraguay.







The Japan Episcopal Church, in the prewar era, had work in Taiwan, Manchuria, and Karafuto (Japanese Sakhalin). At the present time Episcopalian concern centers in Okinawa. Although the churches of Okinawa are under the jurisdiction of the American Diocese of Hawaii, they are visited each year by a bishop from Japan. Ministerial candidates from Okinawa are trained at seminaries in this country. Japanese Episcopalians have budgeted Yen 300,000 to assist in the training of Church School teachers and in the distribution of Christian literature throughout Okinawa.

In and around Sao Paulo, Brazil, the Anglican Communion is represented by seven pastors, ten organized churches, and seven preaching stations that serve the Japanese community in that area.

The Spirit of Jesus Church has been active for five years in Okinawa. They have established fourteen churches on the island, with a total membership of about 7,000. They are sending two women evangelists to the Japanese community in Vancouver, Canada, and have plans to start work in Brazil as well.

Representatives of the Japan Baptist Convention are also at work on the Island of Okinawa.

#### NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The Church School Department of the National Christian Council works to develop Sunday School curriculum for the Japanese churches. The Department experimented for some years with a closely-graded curriculum, but found that this was unsuitable, due to the difficulty of training teachers and to the lack of space in many churches.

During the past three years, these Christian educators have studied the Faith and Life Curriculum of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., and have now worked out a tentative plan for a more loosely-graded "unified" curriculum. Kindergarten children will follow a two-year program, however the rest of the curriculum plan calls for a three-year cycle with the following themes: "Jesus Christ", "The Bible", and "The Church". Outlines are being prepared for primary children, junior high, senior high, youth, and adult departments of the Church School.

The National Council is concerned only with overall planning, units of study, and week-by-week topics. Lesson plans and teaching helps must be prepared by each denomination in line with its particular needs. Users of the curriculum plan will include the Lutheran Church and the United Church. Free Methodist and Nazarene churches have also indicated their acceptance of it.







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Dedication of the curriculum outline is set for next August, when the World Convention on Christian Education will meet in Tokyo.

NOTICE:

Due to Christmas and Year-end holidays there will be no January 1, 1958 issue of J.C.A.N.



